In the Claims:

1. (Currently amended) A computer-implemented method for helping a learner practice by providing hints, the method comprising steps as follows:

providing a ~~simple~~ question to a learner;

making a decision on whether a hint is to be provided to the learner, wherein further comprises:

checking whether all hints have been provided to the learner; and

checking whether the learner needs a hint, wherein the decision is "yes" if all hints have not been provided to the learner and if the learner needs a hint ~~making a decision on whether a hint is to be provided to the learner~~;

providing a hint to the learner if the learner's decision is "yes;"

receiving a learner-given answer from the learner; and

checking whether the learner-given answer is correct.

2. (cancelled)

3. (Currently amended) A method in accordance with claim ~~2~~ 1 wherein the step of checking whether all hints have been provided to the learner is performed before the step of checking whether the learner needs a hint.

4. (original) A method in accordance with claim 1 wherein it returns to the step of making a decision on whether a hint is to be provided to the learner if the learner-given answer is incorrect.

5. (original)A method in accordance with claim 1 further comprising a step of retrieving a correct answer for the ~~simple~~ question before the step of checking whether the learner-given answer is correct.

6. (Currently amended) A computer-implemented method for helping a learner practice wherein a plurality of ~~simple~~ questions are sorted into various grades, the method comprising the steps of:

providing at least one ~~simple~~ question of a grade to a learner;

receiving a learner-given answer from the learner;

checking whether the learner-given answer is correct;

receiving a response from the learner wherein the response is one of "easy," "fit," and "difficult; and

returning to the step of providing at least one ~~simple~~ question based on the determination whether the learner-given answer is correct.

7. (Cancelled)

8. (Currently amended) The method in accordance with claim ~~7~~ 6 further comprising a step of checking whether the grade to which the first ~~simple~~ question belongs reaches the highest grade if the response is "easy."

9. (Currently amended) The method in accordance with claim 8 wherein the second ~~simple~~ question is provided from a higher grade than the first ~~simple~~ question ~~is if~~ when the grade to which the first ~~simple~~ question belongs is not the highest grade.

10. (Currently amended) The method in accordance with claim ~~7~~ 6 wherein the second ~~simple~~ question is provided from the same grade as the first ~~simple~~ question is if the response is "fit."

11. (Currently amended) The method in accordance with claim ~~7~~ 6 further comprising a step of checking whether the grade to which the first ~~simple~~ question belongs reaches the lowest grade if the response is "difficult."

12. (Currently amended) The method in accordance with claim 11 wherein the second ~~simple~~ question is provided from a lower grade than the first ~~simple~~ question ~~is if~~when the grade to which the first ~~simple~~ question belongs is not the lowest grade.

13. (Currently amended) The method in accordance with claim 11 further comprising a step of explaining the concept of the ~~simple~~ question to the learner if the grade to which the first ~~simple~~ question belongs reaches the lowest grade.

14. (Currently amended) The method in accordance with claim 6 wherein a plurality of ~~simple~~ questions are provided in the step of providing at least one ~~simple~~ question.

15. (Currently amended) The method in accordance with claim 14 further comprising a step of evaluating the score of the learner before returning to the step of providing ~~simple~~ questions.

16. (Currently amended) The method in accordance with claim 15 further comprising a step of checking whether the grade to which the first plurality of ~~simple~~ questions belong reaches the highest grade if the score is better than a pre-determined upper criterion.

17. (Currently amended) The method in accordance with claim 16 wherein the second plurality of ~~simple~~ questions are provided from a higher grade than the first plurality of ~~simple~~ questions ~~are if~~ when the grade to which the first plurality of ~~simple~~ questions belong is not the highest grade.

18. (Currently amended) The method in accordance with claim 15 wherein the second plurality of ~~simple~~ questions are provided from the same grade as the first plurality of ~~simple~~ questions ~~are if~~ when the score is between pre-determined upper and lower criteria.

19. (Currently amended) The method in accordance with claim 15 further comprising a step of checking whether the grade to which the first plurality of ~~simple~~ questions belong reaches the lowest grade if the score is worse than a pre-determined upper criterion.

20. (Currently amended) The method in accordance with claim 19 wherein the second plurality of ~~simple~~ questions are provided from a lower grade than the first plurality of ~~simple~~ questions ~~are if~~ when the grade to which the first plurality of ~~simple~~ questions belong is not the lowest grade.

21. (Currently amended) The method in accordance with claim 19 further comprising a step of explaining the concept of the ~~simple~~ questions to the learner if the grade to which the first plurality of ~~simple~~ questions belong reaches the lowest grade.

22. (original) The method in accordance with claim 15 further comprising a step of receiving a response from the learner if the score is better than a pre-determined upper criterion wherein the response is one of "easy," "fit," and "difficult."

23. (Currently amended) The method in accordance with claim 22 further comprising a step of checking whether the grade to which the first plurality of ~~simple~~ questions belong reaches the highest grade if the response is "easy."

24. (Currently amended) The method in accordance with claim 23 wherein the second plurality of ~~simple~~ questions are provided from a higher grade than the first plurality of ~~simple~~ questions ~~are if~~ when not reaching the highest grade and if the response is "easy."

25. (Currently amended) The method in accordance with claim 22 wherein the second plurality of ~~simple~~ questions are provided from the same grade as the first plurality of ~~simple~~ questions ~~are if~~ when the response is "fit."

26. (original) The method in accordance with claim 15 further comprising a step of receiving a response from the learner if the score is worse than a pre-determined lower criterion.

27. (Currently amended) The method in accordance with claim 26 further comprising a step of checking whether the grade to which the first plurality of ~~simple~~ questions belong reaches the lowest grade if the response is "difficult."

28. (Currently amended) The method in accordance with claim 27 wherein the second plurality of ~~simple~~ questions are provided from a lower grade than the first plurality of ~~simple~~ questions ~~are if~~ when not reaching the lowest grade and if the response is "difficult."

29. (Currently amended) The method in accordance with claim 27 further comprising a step of explaining the concept of the ~~simple~~ questions to the learner if the grade to which the

first plurality of ~~simple~~ questions belong reaches the lowest grade and if the response is "difficult."

30. (Currently amended) The method in accordance with claim 26 wherein the second plurality of ~~simple~~ questions are provided from the same grade as the first plurality of ~~simple~~ questions ~~are if~~ when the response is "fit."

31. (Currently amended) The method in accordance with claim 6 further comprising a step of retrieving the correct answer for the ~~simple~~ question provided to the learner before the step of checking whether the learner-given answer is correct.

32. (Currently amended) A computer-implemented method for helping a learner practice wherein a plurality of ~~simple~~ questions are sorted into a plurality of grades in a plurality of categories and a plurality of complex questions each include a plurality of components each falling in a target grade in a category, the method comprising the following steps:

providing a complex question to a learner;

receiving a learner-given answer from the learner for the complex question;

checking whether the learner-given answer for the complex question is correct;

if the learner-given answer is incorrect, selecting one of the components of the complex question and executing the following steps:

providing a ~~simple~~ question from the target grade in the category to which the selected component belongs;

receiving from the learner a learner-given answer for the ~~simple~~ question;

checking whether the learner-given answer for the ~~simple~~ question is correct;

if the learner-given answer for the ~~simple~~ question is correct, checking whether the grade to which the ~~simple~~ question belongs reaches the target grade and performing the following steps:

returning to the component-selecting step if the grade to which the ~~simple~~ question belongs reaches the target grade;

selecting a higher grade and returning to the step of providing a ~~simple~~ question if the grade to which the ~~simple~~ question belongs does not reach the target grade;

if the learner-given answer for the ~~simple~~ question is incorrect, checking whether the grade to which the ~~simple~~ question belongs reaches the lowest grade and performing the following steps:

explaining the concept of the ~~simple~~ question if the grade to which the ~~simple~~ question belongs reaches the lowest grade;

selecting a lower grade and returning to the step of providing a ~~simple~~ question if the grade to which the ~~simple~~ question belongs does not reach the lowest grade.